

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 21-70 are pending. By this Amendment, claim 64 is amended and new claims 68-70 are added. Reconsideration in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

At the outset, Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended by Examiners Brandt and Mitchell during a personal interview conducted on October 25, 2006. The substance of the personal interview is discussed in the following remarks.

Claim 64 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. By this Amendment, claim 64 has been amended to specify that the first and/or second connector portions includes a movable component which defines in part a quick-release connection to release the at least one attachment strap from the mask. Therefore, the language found to be objectionable by the Examiner (i.e., an elastically movable component) has been eliminated from the claim. New claim 68 has been added, which specifies that that movable component comprises a resiliently biased component. Further, new dependent claims 69 and 70 specify that the movable component comprises a biased component (claim 69) and a resilient component (claim 70).

During the personal interview, the Examiner's agreed that the above amendment to claim 64 would obviate the rejection.

Claims 21-61 were rejected on the ground of non-statutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-9 of U.S. Patent No. 6,374,826 B1. Although Applicants do not agree with the rejection, submitted herewith is a duly executed Terminal Disclaimer to obviate the rejection. The filing of a Terminal Disclaimer is not an admission as to the propriety of the rejection, per MPEP 804.02.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

GUNARATNAM et al.
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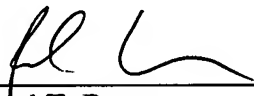
In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that all the claims are patentable and that the entire application is in condition for allowance.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable to place the application in better condition for allowance, he is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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